

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, October 8, 2009

51 N. Street, NE
Lower Level
Washington, DC 20002
6:00pm – 8:00 pm

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

441 4th Street, NW
Old Council Chambers
1st Floor South, Washington, DC 20001
6:00pm – 8:00 pm

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), Department of Special Education will hold two public hearings to discuss a proposed regulation governing early intervention services for children from birth through two (2) years of age referred to as “Part C Early Intervention Services;” and a proposed policy with regard to the identity of children in the District of Columbia who may be eligible for early intervention services or special education services, referred to as a “Comprehensive Child Find Policy.” The OSSE, as the lead agency for early intervention services, is responsible for a statewide system of coordinated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, interagency programming that provides appropriate early intervention services to all infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Additionally, the OSSE is required to ensure that children within the District of Columbia from birth through 21 suspected of needing early intervention or special education and related services are identified, located, and referred for evaluation in a timely manner.

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1. Part C Early Intervention Services, Title 5, Chapter A32 (posted for public comment on Friday, September 18, 2009 and closes on Monday, October 19, 2009):

The purpose of the District of Columbia’s Part C regulations being proposed in conformance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq. (IDEA) is to establish standards for the operation of the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Department of Special Education, DC Early Intervention Program (Program), including family eligibility and cost participation for early intervention services based upon the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

2. Comprehensive Child Find Policy (posted on the OSSE website):

Child Find is a continuous process of public awareness activities, screening, and evaluation designed to locate, identify, and refer all children with disabilities as early as possible. Child Find targets children ages birth through 2.8 years old in need of early intervention services (Part C); children ages 2.8 through 21 in need of special education and related services (Part B); and their families under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400, et seq. (IDEA). Children must meet eligibility criteria according to the IDEA and state guidelines to receive services. The IDEA requires all states and the District of Columbia to have a “comprehensive Child Find system” to assure that all children who are in need of early intervention or special education services are located, identified and referred.

3. Early Childhood Transition Policy (posted on the OSSE website):

The OSSE must have policies and procedures in effect to ensure that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) participate in the collaborative process required to transition eligible children from Part C early intervention services to Part B special education preschool or other programs with appropriate services. This proposed policy serves to clarify what is required of all LEAs regarding early childhood transition requirements as required in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 and its implementing federal regulations.

4. Secondary Transition Policy (posted on the OSSE website):

The IDEA and DCMR clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of all LEAs to adequately prepare students with disabilities for postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation upon graduating or exiting high school. Furthermore, IDEA requires all LEAs to have in effect, by the student’s 16th birthday, or younger if determined appropriate by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team, a coordinated set of activities that is results-oriented and focuses on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student. This proposed policy serves to clarify what is required of all LEA) in order to ensure that the District of Columbia has in place secondary transition policies and procedures as required by the IDE) 2004, its implementing federal regulations, and Title 5, Chapter 30 of the DCMR.

5. State Complaints Policy (posted on the OSSE website):

The State Complaint Office (SCO) of the OSSE will investigate and resolve complaints that allege a violation of Part B of IDEA or the District of Columbia’s laws and policies regarding special education. The IDEA, 34 CFR § 303.510 through § 303.512 also require the lead agency for Part C of the IDEA to adopt written procedures for resolving any complaint that alleges a violation of Part C of the IDEA by a public agency or private service provider. The OSSE is the lead agency for Part C in the District of Columbia. This proposed policy and procedures is intended to govern complaints alleging violations of both Part B and Part C of the IDEA, unless indicated otherwise.

Persons wishing to review these proposals may access them on the OSSE webpage at www.osse.dc.gov under the special education program link on September 15, 2009. The proposed Part C Early Intervention Services regulations will also be published for comment in the District of Columbia Register (DCR) as noted. If you need assistance with accessing the proposed regulations or policies please contact Desiree Brown, State Advisory Panel Coordinator and Community Outreach Specialist, at 202-741-0271 or by e-mail at desiree.brown@dc.gov.

Individuals wishing to testify at one of the hearings should contact Desiree Brown, State Advisory Panel Coordinator and Community Outreach Specialist, at 202-741-0271 or by e-mail at desiree.brown@dc.gov no later than 5 PM on October 7, 2009. Each person presenting verbal testimony will be limited to five (5) minutes in an effort to allow all individuals an opportunity to be heard. Individuals representing an organization will be limited to seven (7) minutes total presentation time.

Individuals who wish to submit their comments as part of the official record, should send copies of written testimony and statements no later than 5 PM on Monday, October 19, 2009 to:

Desiree Brown
Office of the State Superintendent of Education,
Department of Special Education,
51 N Street, NE
7th Floor,
Washington, DC 20002
or
e-mail to osse.publiccomment@dc.gov

Individuals who do not register with the OSSE prior to the hearing may testify based upon a first come-first-serve basis as time permits within the time frames announced for each meeting. On-site assistance with registration will be available prior to each hearing.

Individuals may request an accommodation for a physical disability or language access to participate in the public hearing by contacting Desiree Brown no later than 5 PM on October 1, 2009.